



VOL 2 NO.36

H.Q. No. 11 (CA) L of C Sub-Area

Tel Ext. 129

THURSDAY 23 DEC 1943



CANADIANS IN ORTONA.

Canadians have forced their way into ORTONA. Fierce tank battles are in progress in the streets.

TENSE STRUGGLE FOR ITALIAN PORT. Chief port between TERNOLI and PESCARA and Adriatic pivot of the German Winter line, ORTONA is a valuable prize. The Nazis are bitterly contesting possession of it. Rival tanks are fighting it out in the streets and, before the fierce onslaught of dominion troops, Kesselring's men are giving way but the ground they have conceded so far is only a few hundred yards. Alliers radio reports yesterday that both ORTONA and ORSOLO had fallen, were premature. Indians have repulsed attacks between the two cities and the major portion of the connecting road is in Allied hands.

PRISONERS AND PROGRESS FOR 5TH ARMY. Driving on from the strategic village of SAN RISTO, the 5th Army is now attacking SAN VITO, 6 miles from Casino on the road to Rome. Reports from the central battlefield in Italy state that the Germans are retreating so rapidly north of VENAFRO that they have not had time to bury their dead. French troops are in action in this sector.

SABOTAGE IN NORTHERN ITALY.

Local unrest is adding to German difficulties in Northern Italy. 20 Nazi officers and 160 men have succumbed to guerilla attacks in this region in the last 10 days. The trouble shows no signs of diminishing.

RUSSIAN DRIVE UNCHECKED

RUSSIANS DRAW CLOSER TO VITEBSK. Russian drive is maintaining its momentum and latest news report that the spearhead is only 15 miles from VITEBSK. The last important railway station on the line to the city has been reached. In the SCHLOBIN, KIROVGRAD and KIV sectors, German counter attacks have again been repulsed.

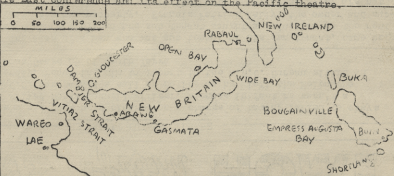
Hanging of the 4 Kharkov criminals in the Kharkov square on Monday is causing Berlin repercussions. German radio warns that, if Churchill and Stalin concur in such summary war trials, reprisals will be taken against British and American prisoners of war not yet charged with breaches of international law.

DISTINGUISHED GENERAL IN AUSTRALIA.

GENERAL MARSHALL IN AUST AND N.G. Amongst the best kept secrets of the war has been the visit of General Marshall to the South west Pacific. Landing in Western Australia on his way home from recent M.E. conferences, he visited Darwin and then crossed to New Guinea. His visit coincided with the ARAWA offensive in New Britain and he has flown over a considerable portion of the operational area. General Marshall was accompanied by General Handey and Rear Admiral Cooke of U.S.A. operational staffs and Brigadier General Haywood Russell, war plans chief. The party discussed with Generals McArthur and Blamey the implications of the Middle East conference and its effect on the Pacific theatre.

JAP LOSSES. In the last 3 days 7 Jap ships in S.W. Pacific have been sunk or damaged. Three ranging from 6000 to 8000 tons received direct hits and were almost certainly destroyed.

HUON PEN GAINS. Further advance of 2 miles has given Australians on Huon Pen. Fortification Point. Land fighting on Arawa had died down.



"WHY NOT MONTICUT?"

Sketch rehearsal at Gen. Theatre 1920 hours.

NEWS from HOME

HE WASN'T BUT HE WILL BE

A bookmaker who had just been cleared on a charge of having failed to obey a direction by an Allied Works Council Officer, because in fact he wasn't a member of the C.O.C. was handed a call up notice as he left the Melbourne City Court yesterday, requiring him to report to the A.W.C. Bureau within an hour. He was James Geard 45 of South Yarra.

KELLY VERSUS KELLY. The case of a man who was sub tenant of his own tenant, came before the Fair Rents Court at Geelong (Vic) when the sub tenant sought a reduction in the rent that he paid for the flat, his own property. Francis Patrick Kelly the owner and sub-tenant, and Joseph Patrick Kelly the tenant were the parties involved. They are not related to each other. Francis let the house to Joseph and subsequently got married. He took his bride to see the house she couldn't occupy and they prevailed on Joseph to let them have a flat at 21/- weekly. Subsequently Francis found another couple occupied a flat in his house at 30/-. As the rental of the whole house was only 25/- Francis applied to the Court for a reduction in the charge for his flat and it was reduced to 16/6.

A WALKING FISH ? A peculiar fish, coloured, and about 7 ft long, was caught at Cottesloe W.A. by some fishermen about 8 o'clock last night. It had four rows of teeth at the top and bottom jaws at the front of the mouth and three rows top and bottom at the back of the mouth. Two short appendages much like legs were on the sides of the fish near the tail. This is a true fish story.

IM DREAMING OF A DRY XMAS "If you stick around until the bottle department opens at 11 o'clock you might get one bottle if you are lucky" This was the typical answer received by a Melbourne newspaper man who visited 11 hotels in one morning and asked for half a dozen bottles of beer for Xmas. Another barman replied "Don't be silly, I couldn't get that many between now and Xmas for myself". Casual buyers of liquor therefore seem likely to spend a dry Xmas. The Secretary of the L.V.A. pointed out that many publicans had converted a large portion of their bottled quota into draft, in an effort to maintain a bar supply, but even so most were forced to close their hotels 8 to 10 days monthly to eke out their supply.

KING GEORGE TO SPEAK. King George will speak to the Allied nations over the B.B.C at 1 a.m. Sydney time on Sunday. The King's speech will form part of a round the world broadcast and will be relayed through 2 B.L. and regionals beginning at 12.10 a.m. The broadcast will be repeated on Sunday from 2 P.C. beginning at 2 p.m.

RECORD COAL OUTPUT. "The coal output of the Southern District Coal Mines for the past 3 months has established an all time record" said the President of the Southern Miners' Delegate Board, Mr. F. Lowden yesterday. Most stoppages of the South coast during the last twelve weeks were because of mechanical breakdowns.

POST WAR IMPORTANCE OF N.Z. AND AUSTRALIA. The New Zealand Minister to Washington Mr. Nash said in Sydney on Tuesday that Australia and New Zealand would have an important part to play in the post war world reconstruction. The full effect of the two countries having been preserved from the ravages of the war would be felt when their help was most needed. He added they would be able to help mostly through food resources. Mr. Nash arrived in Sydney en route for Washington after conferring with Federal Ministers. He said there was plenty of plain food in New Zealand and little black marketing, no 5/- maximum in the cafes, and no shortage of meat.

OUT OF ALL EVIL ? Crippled children at Montrose Home, Brisbane will have two hams for Xmas, because a local grocer Mr. N.H. McIntyre thought it would be better to make the children happy than to dissatisfy his customers with the small quantity he could allow them.

THE ARMY BEHIND THE CIVILIANS. Even allowing for drenching rain that have done damage to their crops, Army vegetable gardens have done much to relieve the strain upon civilian supplies during the past three months. One half acre plot worked by a horse transport company yielded nearly 5 tons of tomatoes during October and November, and the few days in December before the rains came.

MORE NOR FORCE CARNIVAL RESULTS

Football result: to hand confirms area team's defeat in the Australian Rules final by a W.A. Inf. Bde. Final scores were 8 goals 17 (56 points) to 7 goals 5 behinds (47 points). Details of the match not available. Up to time of going to press, there was no news of our progress in the first night of the boxing tournament. Area fighters engaged tonight when the tournament will conclude are HILBROOK who meets O'NEAL (Inf) LATHAM who will fight CLIFTON (14 B) DALTON who is engaged against RELALLICK (14A) and the genial "BUCK" ROGERS who clashed with KILLINGLEY (Artillery)

AROUND THE AREA

OPEN AIR DANCE C. of E. Rec Centre. Band, Cool Drinks **NO CAMP PICTURES TONIGHT**

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